



Revegetation Program

FEDERAL LANDS TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM FACT SHEET

The setting and character of our national parks are often strongly defined by vegetation. Iconic landscapes include crop and native grasslands of historic battlefields, midwestern tallgrass prairies, saguaro and organ pipe cacti in the southwest, and giant sequoias and redwoods in the west.



Before and after revegetation outside the visitor center at Dinosaur National Monument. (Photo:NPS)

Purpose and Need in National Parks

Conserving historically appropriate and natural landscapes is a key role of the National Park Service (NPS). Park construction and maintenance activities such as road construction, road repairs, bridge maintenance, parking lot expansions, and trail construction impact park resources including vegetation and soils. These disturbances increase the potential for weed invasions and can lead to alterations to ecosystems and impact unique characteristics of park landscapes.



Seed increase is a method of growing native seed in agricultural fields and increasing genetically appropriate seed for use in revegetation projects at national parks. (Photo:NPS)

Revegetation of disturbed land minimizes the impacts on park resources, re-establishes plant communities appropriate to the park setting, stabilizes disturbed soils, decreases soil erosion, and increases water infiltration.

The revegetation program integrates unique park service mandates and policies into revegetation project delivery. The benefits of successfully integrating revegetation into NPS projects is the restoration and protection of natural resources and landscapes, the protection of capital investments from erosion by stabilizing slopes and soils, providing food and shelter for wildlife, and enhancing visitor enjoyment.

Access to and within the National Park System has been a defining experience for generations of visitors. The National Park Service coordinates the planning and implementation of transportation systems that improve the visitor experience and care for national parks by: **1) Preserving natural and cultural resources** **2) Enhancing visitor safety and security** **3) Protecting plant and animal species** **4) Reducing congestion** **5) Decreasing pollution.**

What does the Revegetation Program Do?

The revegetation program provides technical advisors to parks and project managers during a project with ground disturbing activities. Technical advisors have expertise in the disciplines of biology, botany, soils, and ecological restoration. These experts work with park units, private farms and contractors, leading efforts to grow native plant materials appropriate to each park in an effort to adhere to the guiding policy principles of the program that include:

- » Return areas impacted by human disturbance to pre-disturbance natural conditions.
- » Use genetically and ecologically appropriate plant materials to restore and revegetate disturbed lands.
- » Integrate revegetation costs from project inception to completion.
- » Select plant materials that support pollinator and wildlife species when ecologically appropriate.

For both old and new disturbances the revegetation program assists parks with: revegetation plans, soil analysis, seed collection, plant and seed production, plant material selection, seed application, weed control, erosion control, and construction design and specification reviews.

Yosemite National Park

Restoration of historic wetlands and side channels of the Merced River was made possible by the removal of parking lots in Yosemite Valley. The revegetation program helped create and manage contracts and agreements for the production of over 20,000 native plants and growing of hundreds of pounds of native seed.



Before revegetation



During revegetation



After revegetation



Before revegetation



During revegetation



After revegetation
(All photos: NPS)

Badlands National Park

Badlands National Park is defined by the power of erosive forces on landscapes. When a large erosion event washed out a portion of a hillslope just below the popular park loop road, the revegetation program assisted with plant materials selection for slope stabilization, weed control, and erosion control materials and installation. Program staff created and managed contracts to grow and install native plants and erosion control materials. Follow-on services included vegetation monitoring and weed control efforts.